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To The Editor of the "English Journal":

Just what was Mr. John McClure's objective in the article "The High Priest and the Heretic" published in the *English Journal* of October? Was his article intended merely as an exhibition of dynamics? Or does he imagine that, like shrapnel shot without a target, he has proved composition may be lively without unity and coherence? I confess that I cannot decide.

But there are among his observations some statements that present a challenge to my belief as to what the purpose of teaching composition in the high school really is not. The purpose is not to turn out Waltons, Burtons, and Lambs, thank the Lord! Nor is the English teacher deluded by the thought that the average youngster has attained the wit of Chesterton, the wisdom of Thackeray, the humor of Lamb, the antiquarian lore of Burton, or the vision of Shakespeare. We do not feel that we are trying to furnish such an original style to a pupil, or develop it in him, that when he is forty he may write something immortal.

We aim, in the high school, merely to lay a foundation for a clear, simple style. We are perfectly aware of the fact that, for the average high-school student, we are aiming at uniformity of expression. If Professor Duplewiddy's book is a type which assists the vast majority of pupils to obtain a style that is readily apprehended by that majority, by all means adopt it! Think what effect it would have upon the appearance of the *English Journal* alone, if we recommended the adoption of such abortive sentence structure as shocks the expectant reader of Mr. McClure's article! And what effect upon our nerves! To quote Mr. McClure, himself: "Pure explosions! We *must* have form!!"

Yours very truly,

GLEN OWENS

BALTIMORE CITY COLLEGE  
BALTIMORE, NOV. 1, 1918

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### EXAMINATION PAPERS

These two papers were written in forty-five-minute, unannounced tests in the Milwaukee Junior High School. They were sent to the *Journal* by Miss Irma L. Wallace.

#### A

#### I. What is sacrifice?

Sacrifice, nowadays, seems to mean simply the giving up of luxuries or unnecessaries. But that is not all it means. America does not know what sacrifice is. France and England are beginning to understand it, but it has

not yet reached America. A bomb fell among a group of soldiers on the battle line, without exploding. Quick as thought a young soldier threw himself upon it. It burst, and he was blown to pieces, but the other soldiers were uninjured. This was sacrifice. He who suffered Himself to be crucified, made the mightiest sacrifice of all. He might have risen in His might and destroyed the world, but instead He died for us.

## II. Talk to a slacker.

What is your line of thought? If you don't care whether we win or lose why are you on this side of the Rhine? Supposing your kaiser did win the war. Wouldn't you suffer as much as any real American? Do you think he would take you under his special protection for saying a few words against our cause? Why did you come over to America? Because it was a better place than your fatherland. You could not succeed over there. You were dressed in rags, wore wooden shoes, and were pushed off the sidewalk by the haughty Prussian officers who called you "schwein." If you want to go back to that, we will clothe you in rags, give you back your wooden shoes that you came here in, pack you all in a boat, and send you back to your murdering countrymen and your "ich und Gott" kaiser.

## III. Discuss the following inscription from an English Soldiers' cemetery.

"Ye who pass, know that we who lie here are content." What a message is in that line. Those noble men have done their duty, fought for their God and their country, and died like Christians. What it cost them we shall never know. No one shall remember the things they have endured, dropping all else to take up arms in defense of their country. A moment and they are forgotten, but what they have died for will live forever, as long as there is a God in Heaven. But though they are forgotten they are content, and when the last victory has been won and the last battle done, their spirits shall still live on in the moonlight over the dark, cross-marked fields of Flanders.

## IV. Why should Americans adopt French orphans?

For three bloody years the French have stretched their living wall of men across the way to America. Thousands upon thousands of their men have fallen in the awful fight to keep the Huns away from their cities, and, in a larger sense, to keep them away from America. And still France is holding the greater part of that line, holding until America can prepare. France has paid the price for all of us these three years, and she is fighting her last fight in war. Is it not, therefore, our duty, before God and man, to care for the thousands of homeless orphans, whose fathers have fallen in the strife, fighting to save our country and our lives?

GUY TALLMADGE.

## B

### I. Explain how poetry will help us win the war.

There are numerous reasons why poetry is going to help us win this war—make us win it. In the first place, it takes just as much imagination, just as much vision, just as much ambition and fine purpose and clinging to ideals

to win a war as it does to paint a great picture or build a beautiful building or accomplish any other more evidently poetic task. Of course efficiency plays a great part in winning a war—the efficient transporting of and caring for troops and supplies, the getting the greatest possible value from every man, woman, and child in the country; but men are necessary to accomplish these tremendous things—big men, men who can see visions and dream dreams of what should be done and then turn around and do it. One of the reasons for many of the failures of the Germans is that, while mechanically they are highly efficient, they lack the abstract poetry to go with it—they do not read men or value their lives, they do not have “faith that sings,” but only an iron-like, grim determination. Our power to see things before they are done, visualize our means and our end, our steadfast clinging to the ideals toward which we are constantly striving, our imagination—all elements of poetry in its broad sense—are going to bring the result of our victory in this terrible war.

(Broad definition of poetry: Poetry is the dream side, the vision side, the imaginative side, of the world's activity. It is the abstract from which the concrete is made possible. It is Faith that sings.)

II. Discuss: A nation with an ideal cannot live for itself alone.

“No nation with an ideal can live for itself alone.” We are having an example of this excellent truth at the present time—that country which is trying to live only and entirely for itself is showing the world that it has no ideal worth living for. While on the other hand, we countries who live to achieve great and never-forgotten ideals are casting to the winds our individual selfish desires and are working together to free the world from fear and militarism. One ideal of worth is part of the great poetry of life—one is not a poet, does not live poetry, unless he has high ideals. So it is with a nation. And just as a man with true ideals cannot shut himself up and live for himself only, no nation can live for itself alone and continue to cling to precious ideals. Poetry demands that we live for other people, to help the world become a better and brighter place in which to live, that we contribute all the song and spirit there is in us. Our mission as individuals and as a nation is to work for the common good. Ideals are big, broad, splendid things, and it would defeat their very idea and purpose to shut ourselves up—it would be narrowing, and true ideals are broad, never narrow. It is only with friendly intercourse with other nations that we are going to be able to progress and grow broad and finally draw nearer to the end for which we are working.

III. “There is something greater than Life; we who lie here tell you this.”

(Inscribed on the grave of a French soldier.) Comment on this.

“There is something greater than Life; we who lie here tell you this.” This is indeed a beautiful thought to be inscribed on a soldier's grave, and somehow seems particularly fitting for a French soldier—it exemplifies their wonderful spirit and hope; what true poet-soldiers they are! It is true that there is something greater than life, but not to all people is it given to enjoy

it—it is death full of glory, a life given not in vain for a loved one, one's country so often. We believe the words "We who lie here tell you this"; these intrepid soldiers, many of them probably mere lads, have fought and died for "La belle France," their first love and their last, and are finally contented, though perhaps sorry that they have but one life to give. If we could have seen them fall, we would no doubt have seen a great light in their eyes, seen the spirit of love shine 'til the last. What better inscription on a soldier's grave than the thought he has carried with him through all his battles?

IV. Write a Third Liberty Bond speech.

For the third time now within a year, uncle Sam is about to call upon us to open our pockets for him. Perhaps it seems very soon after the last Liberty Loan, perhaps there seem to be so many other demands upon our purses, what with Red Cross and Y.M.C.A and Thrift Stamps and Charity and the food we must buy for our families—yes, there are many demands, but that is to be expected, and they must all be met cheerfully and willingly. When we stop to consider what hundreds of young men are offering to their country, their most precious possession of all—their lives—it seems a very meager return for that country to do her utmost to supply them with all possible comforts and all the tools of war. How can a war, the most expensive game that man has ever invented, be played without money, and vast sums of it? And how is a democracy to get that money if her people are not willing to give it freely? If we lived in Germany, the money in larger sums would be wrenched from us. How willing then ought we be to give that money to prevent Germany's gaining a grasp upon us?

MARGARET JAMES

#### DRAMATIZATION OF *THE LADY OF THE LAKE*

Last winter a dramatization of Scott's "Lady of the Lake" was presented by a cast of first-year students in Lincoln High School under the direction of their teacher, Mr. Homer Hewitt.

Interest in the project arose from class study of the poem; and as no dramatization could be found the members worked out their own. Much of the poem had to be omitted as impossible to stage, while here and there lines had to be added to make the action clear.

The following is a synopsis of the scenes chosen:

#### ACT I

SCENE 1. Edge of Loch Katrine—Meeting of Fitz-James and Ellen.

SCENE 2. Ellen's Home—Welcome to Fitz-James—"Soldier Rest."

SCENE 3. Same as Scene I—Fitz-James departs—Roderick comes—"Hail to the Chief."

SCENE 4. Same as Scene II—Roderick's proposal.